IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A communication interface between an accounting application and a printer agent application executing on a computer network, the interface comprising:

application programming interface (API) functions exchanged <u>and bound</u> between the applications that provide accounting support for print services directed to a print job received by the printer agent, <u>wherein the print job is directly received from a print client by the printer agent,</u> the accounting support services including tracking production of the print job and computer network resources consumed by the job, the API functions comprising a first print service API that is called by the printer agent before the print job is created and that enables the accounting application to one of reject the print job, accept the print job and instruct the printer agent to place an accounting hold on the print job.

2. (Original) The communication interface of Claim 1 wherein the API functions further comprise a second print service API that is called by the printer agent after the print job is created and before the job is scheduled for processing, the second print service API including (i) a job identifier for use by the accounting application to evaluate and act upon attributes of the job and (ii) a file path to a document data file associated with the job.

3. (Original) The communication interface of Claim 2 wherein the API functions further comprise a third print service API that is called by the printer agent when processing of the print job is complete, the third print service API including the job identifier and the file path to the document data file associated with the job, the file path used by the accounting application to evaluate the completed job and perform accounting operations.

4. (Original) The communication interface of Claim 3 wherein the accounting application and printer agent execute on a print server of the computer network, and wherein the API functions facilitate computing of charges by the accounting application for print services and materials used by a print client of the computer network.

5. (Currently Amended) A method for communicating between applications executing on a computer network, the method comprising the steps of:

    providing an accounting application configured to run on a first device coupled to the network;

    providing a printer agent application configured to run on a second device coupled to the network, the printer agent representing a printer on the network and containing information about the printer; and

    exchanging application programming interface (API) function calls and binding the same between applications that provide accounting support for print service relating to a print job directly received by the printer agent from a print client and directed to the printer, the accounting support services including tracking production of the print job and resources consumed by the job.

6. (Original)   The method of Claim 5 wherein the first device is a computer and the second device is the printer, and wherein information contained in the printer agent comprises a network address of the printer and a status of the printer.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 5 wherein the step of exchanging comprises the step of calling a first print service API at the printer agent before the print job is created, the first print service API enabling the accounting application to one of reject the print job, accept the print job and instruct the printer agent to place an accounting hold on the print job.

8. (Original)   The method of Claim 7 wherein the step of exchanging further comprises the step of calling a second print service API at the printer agent after the print job is created and before the job is scheduled for processing, the second print service API including (i) a job identifier for

use by the accounting application to evaluate and act upon attributes of the job and (ii) a file path

to a document data file associated with the job.

9. (Original)   The method of Claim 8 wherein the step of exchanging further comprises the step

of calling a third print service API at the printer agent when processing of the print job is

complete, the third print service API including the job identifier and the file path to the document

data file with the job, the file path used by the accounting application to evaluate the completed

job and perform accounting operations.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 9 further comprising the step of registering the accounting

application with the printer agent to provide the printer agent with addresses for the API print

service calls.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 10 further comprising the steps of, wherein the

first and second devices comprises a single print server:

~~submitting the print job from a print client on the network to the printer agent;~~

obtaining information about the print job at the accounting application using the API

function calls; and

using the obtained information to leverage functions directed to acquiring and setting

attributes for the print job, thereby extending the utility of the attribute functions for the

accounting application.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium containing executable program

instructions for communicating between applications executing on a computer network, the

executable program instructions comprising program instructions for:

configuring an accounting application to run on the computer;

configuring a printer agent application to run on the computer, the printer agent

representing a printer on the network and containing information about the printer; and

exchanging application programming interface (API) function calls <u>and binding the same</u>

between applications that provide accounting support for print services relating to a print job

received by the printer agent and directed to the printer, <u>wherein the print job is received directly from a print client,</u> the accounting support services including tracking production of the print job and computer resources consumed by the job.

13. (Original) The computer readable medium of Claim 12 wherein the program instruction for exchanging comprises the program instruction for calling a first print service API at the printer agent before the print job is created, the first print service API enabling the accounting application to one of reject the print job, accept the print job and instruct the printer agent to place an accounting hold on the print job.

14. (Original) The computer readable medium of Claim 13 wherein the program instruction for exchanging further comprises the program instruction for calling a second print service API at the printer agent after the print job is created and before the job is scheduled for processing, the second print service API including (i) a job identifier for use by the accounting application to evaluate and act upon attributes of the job and (ii) a file path to a document data file associated with the job.

15. (Original) The computer readable medium of Claim 14 wherein the program instruction for exchanging further comprises the program instruction for calling a third print service API at the printer agent when processing of the print job is complete, the third print service API including the job identifier and the file path to the document data file associated with the job, the file path used by the accounting application to evaluate the completed job and perform accounting operations.

16. (Original) The computer readable medium of Claim 15 further comprising the program instruction for registering the accounting application with the printer agent to provide the printer agent with the addresses for the API print service calls.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of Claim 16 further comprising

program instructions for, wherein the computer is a print server:

~~submitting the print job from a print client on the network to the printer agent;~~

obtaining information about the print job at the accounting application using the API

function calls; and

using the obtained information to leverage functions directed to acquiring and setting

attributes for the print job, thereby extending the utility of the attribute functions for the

accounting application.